



# Montgomery County Council

*From the office of Councilmember Phil Andrews*

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**News Advisory**

**July 3, 2006**

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## **Two Years after Region's First Smoke-free Law, Montgomery Restaurant Receipts Up 19%**

Restaurant sales tax receipts rose by 19% in the two years after the region's first smoke-free restaurant law took effect, according to state sales tax data released today by Montgomery County Councilmember Phil Andrews and former County Councilmember Isiah Leggett.

The sales tax data shows receipts from Montgomery County restaurants rose from \$57.7 million in the twelve months preceding the County's smoke-free law to \$62.1 million after the first year and to \$68.8 million after the second year, an increase of \$11.1 million or 19.2%. Receipts have continued to climb in the first half of the third year as well, according to the sales tax data reported by restaurants to the Maryland Comptroller.

"Montgomery's Smoke-free Restaurant law is protecting thousands of restaurant workers and hundreds of thousands of patrons from hazardous second-hand smoke. There is no cost to taxpayers since compliance is not a problem. Meanwhile, our restaurant industry continues to thrive," said Andrews, the bill's lead sponsor.

"When I introduced the Smoke-free Restaurant bill in 1999, Big Tobacco ran scare ads claiming that Silver Spring would become a ghost town. How wrong they were. The Council was right to lead the way and put the public health first," said Leggett.

Last month, the Surgeon General of the United States released the most comprehensive scientific report ever on the dangers of second-hand tobacco  
(more...)

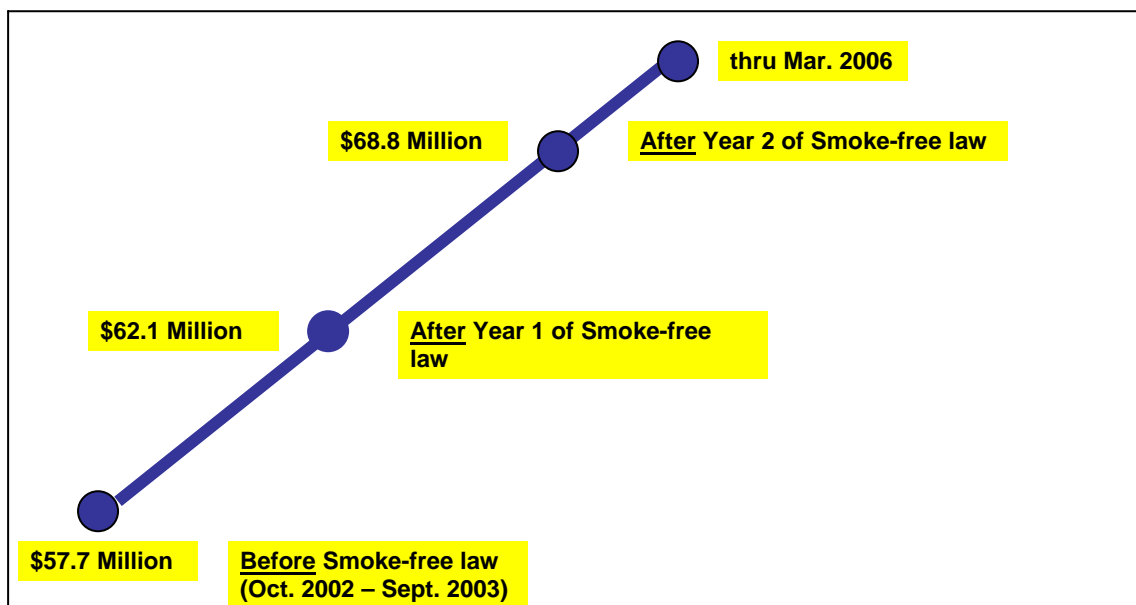
page two

smoke. The report concluded that there are no safe levels of exposure, and that smoke-free indoor workplaces and indoor public places are necessary to protect the public health.

Montgomery's Smoke-free law was approved by the County Council, 8-1, on July 1, 2003 and took effect October 9, 2003. Leggett was the lead sponsor of the 1999 Smoke-free Restaurant bill passed by the County Council, 5-4, but vetoed by County Executive Douglas M. Duncan. Duncan signed the 2003 bill, introduced by Andrews, which was identical to the 1999 bill. Montgomery's law includes bar areas within restaurants. The County does not have stand-alone bars.

Since Montgomery's law took effect, Rockville, Gaithersburg, Talbot County, Prince George's County, the District of Columbia, Charles County and Howard County have approved smoke-free restaurant laws. Nationally, more than a dozen states, including New York, New Jersey and Delaware -- but not Maryland or Virginia -- and more than a hundred localities have approved smoke-free restaurant laws.

### **Restaurant Sales Tax Receipts Up 19.2% in Montgomery County Two Years after Smoke-free Restaurant law**



The Montgomery County Smoke-free Restaurant law took effect October 9, 2003

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